United Nations S/2017/1089

Security Council

Distr.: General
21 December 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 21 December 2017 from the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa for 2017, as endorsed by the members of the Working Group.

I would be grateful if the present letter and the report could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Tekeda **Alemu**
Chair
Ad Hoc Working Group
on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa

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Report on the activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa for 2017

I. Introduction

1. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa is a subsidiary organ of the Security Council, established pursuant to the statement by the President of the Security Council of 31 January 2002 (S/PRST/2002/2), in which the Council recognized the need for adequate measures to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa and indicated its intention to consider the establishment of an ad hoc working group to monitor the recommendations contained in the statement and to enhance coordination with the Economic and Social Council.

2. The present report of the Working Group covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017. The Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, Tekeda Alemu, was appointed Chair of the Working Group for a one-year period ending 31 December 2017. The Permanent Representative of Senegal, Fodé Seck, served as Vice-Chair throughout the reporting period.

II. Activities of the Working Group in 2017

3. On 23 February 2017, the Working Group met to consider its activities for 2017 as proposed by the Chair. The members agreed to the provisional programme of work proposed by the Chair.

4. On 26 April 2017, the Working Group held a joint meeting with the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations on the topic "Building synergies for peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Africa: how can the United Nations and the African Union and its regional mechanisms enhance their strategic partnership?" Briefings were given at the joint session, which was the first of its kind, by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Taye-Brook Zerihoun; the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, El-Ghassim Wane; the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Cho Tae-yul; and the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, Tete António.

5. The members of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations were also invited to attend the joint meeting, which was co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Senegal as Chair of the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, and the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia as Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group. The format of the meeting was considered to be innovative and believed to contribute to the improvement of the working methods of the Security Council. Among the issues raised were the need to enhance the partnership with the African Union on a range of peace and security issues, the importance of strengthening the relationship between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, and stronger engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission on African issues.

6. On 12 July 2017, the Working Group considered the topic "Silencing the guns in Africa: challenges and prospects of creating a continent free of conflict". Briefers at this meeting were the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, Macharia Kamau; the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations, Olof Skoog; the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; and the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations. The discussion allowed members of the Working Group to explore ways and means of strengthening the United Nations-African Union partnership to address emerging peace and security

threats on the African continent. The participants in the discussion emphasized the need to effectively utilize the range of frameworks and tools available in both organizations for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. In this respect, they also highlighted the importance of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, the implementation of the master road map of the African Union on practical steps to silence the guns in Africa and the operationalization of the African Union Peace and Security Architecture, as well as the need to link peacekeeping to peacebuilding in Africa.

7. On 8 August 2017, the Working Group began consideration of how it could assist the Security Council in preparing for the eleventh annual joint consultative meeting of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa on 8 September 2017, which was preceded by the informal meeting held in Addis Ababa on 7 September 2017. On 25 August 2017, the Working Group met to further discuss preparatory matters related to the joint consultative meeting.

8. This was the first stand-alone visit by the Security Council to the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa. During the joint consultative meeting, the two Councils exchanged views on the situation in Somalia, the situation in South Sudan and the situation in the Lake Chad Basin region. Prior to the joint consultative meeting, the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union held an informal joint meeting and exchanged views on the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations, funding for African Union peace and security activities, and post-conflict peacebuilding.

III. Conclusions

9. The Working Group has served as a useful forum for preparations and exchanges on the joint consultative meetings and other joint activities of the members of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. Moreover, in paragraph 18 of its resolution 2033 (2012), the Security Council decided to follow up on the communiques of the annual consultative meetings of the two Councils, including through the Working Group. In that connection, the Chair recommends that the Working Group should continue to exercise that mandate.

10. The Chair recalls that several members had suggested that the Working Group include country-specific discussions on its programme of work, which might make the Working Group more operational. In that connection, the Chair recommends that the Working Group consider including country-specific issues on its programme of work for 2018.